

COPD—Adult Asthma

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What are the Signs and Symptoms of COPD?

The signs and symptoms of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) include:

- Cough
- Sputum (mucus) production
- Shortness of breath, especially with exercise
- Wheezing (a whistling or squeaky sound when you breathe)
- Chest tightness

A cough that doesn't go away and coughing up lots of mucus are common signs of COPD. These often occur years before the flow of air in and out of the lungs is reduced. However, not everyone with a cough and sputum production goes on to develop COPD, and not everyone with COPD has a cough.

The severity of the symptoms depends on how much of the lung has been destroyed. If you continue to smoke, the lung destruction is faster than if you stop smoking.



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Who is at Risk for Asthma?

In the United States, about 20 million people have asthma; nearly 5 million of them are children.

Although asthma affects people of all ages, it most often starts in childhood. More boys have asthma than girls, but in adulthood, more women have asthma than men.

Although asthma affects people of all races, African Americans are more likely than Caucasians to be hospitalized for asthma attacks and to die from asthma.

Asthma is a Lung Disease

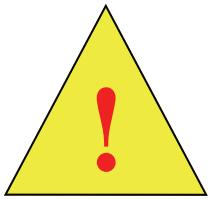
It causes trouble with breathing and this trouble usually happens in episodes, sometimes called “attacks”.

- * Asthma is not contagious.
- * Asthma can be controlled or managed, but not cured.
- * When uncontrolled, asthma can be disabling.



An asthma attack or flare-up occurs when the breathing tubes that carry air to the lungs swell up, the muscles around these tubes tighten, and the tubes make large amounts of a thick fluid called mucus. This could cause you to have trouble breathing.

Warning signs of an asthma attack:



- * Tightness in the chest
- * Shortness of breath
- * Wheezing
- * Coughing

People with asthma who learn to spot the early signs of an attack can take medicine right away. This may make the attack less severe.

Managing Asthma and Asthma Triggers

No one knows what causes asthma. Lots of things set off asthma attacks. These things are called **triggers**. Some people only have one or two triggers. Other people have many. Common triggers:



Pollen (from trees and flowers)



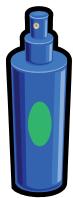
Dander (skin flakes from cats, dogs, and other pets)



Pests (roaches or rodents)



Dust mites (these are tiny spiders you can't see, they live everywhere—in carpets,



upholstered furniture, stuffed animals, and bedding)

Cigarette Smoke



Mold

Perfume, Hairspray, Cleaning Products.

Asthma Action Plan

Asthma Action Plan for _____

Date _____

Healthcare Provider's Name _____

Phone Number _____

Hospital/Emergency Room Phone Number _____

GREEN ZONE: Doing Well

- No cough, wheeze, chest tightness, or shortness of breath during the day or night
- Can do usual activities

And, if a peak flow meter is used,**Peak flow:** more than _____
(80% or more of my best peak flow)

My best peak flow is: _____

Take These Long-Term-Control Medicines Each Day (include an anti-inflammatory)

Medicine	How much to take	When to take it

Before Exercise

_____ 2 or 4 puffs 5 to 60 minutes before exercise

YELLOW ZONE: Asthma is Getting Worse

- Cough, wheeze, chest tightness, or shortness of breath, or
- Waking at night due to asthma, or
- Can do some, but not all, usual activities

OR**Peak flow:** _____ to _____
(50% - 80% of my best peak flow)*Add: Quick-Relief Medicine—and keep taking your GREEN ZONE medicine*

_____ 2 or 4 puffs, every 20 minutes for up to 1 hr
(short-acting beta₂-agonist) Nebulizer, once

If your symptoms (and peak flow, if used) *return to GREEN ZONE* after 1 hour of above treatment:

- Take the quick-relief medicine every 4 hours for 1 to 2 days.
- Double the dose of your inhaled steroid for _____ (7-10) days.

OR

If your symptoms (and peak flow, if used) *do not return to GREEN ZONE* after 1 hour of above treatment:

- Take: _____ 2 or 4 puffs or Nebulizer
(short-acting beta₂-agonist)
- Add: _____ mg. per day for _____ (3-10) days
(oral steroid)
- Call your healthcare provider before / within _____ hours after taking the oral steroid.

RED ZONE: Medical Alert!

- Very short of breath, or
- Quick-relief medicines have not helped, or
- Cannot do usual activities, or
- Symptoms are same or get worse after 24 hours in Yellow Zone

OR**Peak flow:** less than _____
(50% of my best peak flow)

Take this medicine:

_____ 4 or 6 puffs or Nebulizer
(short-acting beta₂-agonist)

_____ mg.
(oral steroid)

Then call your healthcare provider NOW. Go to the hospital or call for an ambulance if:

- You are still in the red zone after 15 minutes AND
- You have not reached your healthcare provider.

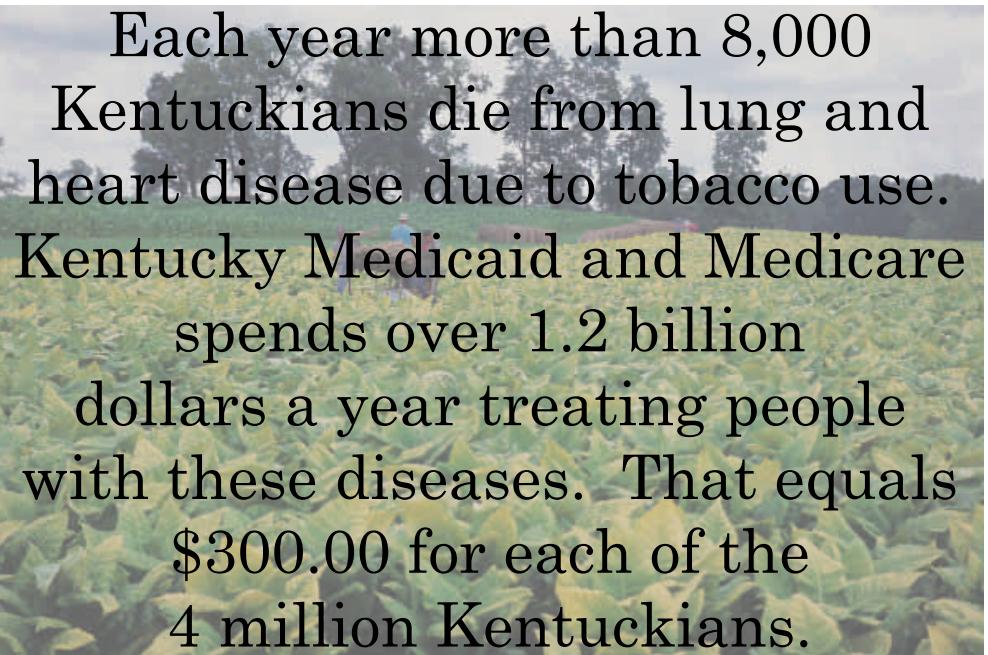
DANGER SIGNS

- Trouble walking and talking due to shortness of breath
- Lips or fingernails are blue
- Take 4 or 6 puffs of your quick-relief medicine AND
- Go to the hospital or call for an ambulance (_____) **NOW!**



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Tobacco Use



Each year more than 8,000 Kentuckians die from lung and heart disease due to tobacco use. Kentucky Medicaid and Medicare spends over 1.2 billion dollars a year treating people with these diseases. That equals \$300.00 for each of the 4 million Kentuckians.

*This information is for educational purposes, it is not intended to replace medical advice from your healthcare provider.
Please consult your healthcare provider for advice about a specific medical condition.*